



# Fireball!

## USS OZBOURN DD 846 "the Happy Ship"

Vol. 6 No. 1 January 1997

### FROM THE BRIDGE

Planning and organizing for the '97 reunion, October 25-29 in San Diego (Handelery Hotel) is on track with the Armed Forces Reunions. No activities have been scheduled so far nor have I sent our announcements to veterans, etc. magazines. These essential aspects of the reunion will be addressed right after the first of the year. The next issue will contain specifics on hotel reservations, signing up for activities, etc.

Again I remind all shipmates that election of officers is scheduled for the reunion. In the last issue of the Fireball! I solicited candidates for the office of president, but so far no volunteers! Don't be shy. As I said previously, I won't go away in case my successor needs help!

I should mention that I managed to get my column on my experience in St. Petersburg relative to Admiral Gorshkov published in Naval History (US Naval Institute, December 1996, p.11) in case any of our readers subscribe to it.

Many thanks to "WD" Minter and Paul Logan for their activities on the Internet. I have appointed a committee to make organized searches for shipmates; at this time it consists of Paul Logan, chairman, "WD" Minter and Calvin (Pat) Patterson. However, the committee is not necessarily limited to these shipmates. Paul outlines the project elsewhere in this issue.

Finally, for those shipmates who served in '50-51 and remember "Brute" Roeder as Commander, Desdiv 112 ("Mobilize Dog"). I recently met a retired Marine light colonel who served on his staff while Brute was Commander First Fleet in the mid '60's. The person in question was in charge of Brute's marine detail and had nothing but the highest praise for our late division commander.

Best wishes to all Shipmates for '97 and hope to see you at the reunion.

Bob Whitten, President

### ORGANIZED SEARCH COMMITTEE ESTABLISHED

A major goal set at our last reunion was to increase our membership by finding our past shipmates not on our muster rolls. With some preliminary work started in this direction Bob Whitten has established an "Organized Search" committee and appointed Paul G. Logan as Chairman. In addition WD Minter and Pat Patterson will serve as the nucleus of this committee.

The first ten years of the Ozbourn muster lists have arrived. These lists, on 16 mm microfilm, contain the names, service numbers and ratings of enlisted men aboard the Ozbourn from 1946 to 1956. They were reported on a monthly basis. The lists, obtained from the National Archives, are being read and photo copied.

The committee is working on a direction and procedures to use this and any other information most efficiently. One of the basic aims of the Committee is to record a list of about 1500 former shipmates into a data base. After this list is established procedures will be developed to search CD Rom telephone numbers programs to obtain current addresses of former crew members.

This project will require considerable man-hours to complete. The USS Purvis started out with 2 members and now has over 1000.

The Committee is trying to recruit volunteers to assist in the project. We are presently looking for shipmates with computers and or CD ROM Telephone Programs.

Could you spare one hour a week, four hours a month to help uncover former shipmates. If we can recruit a enough members to give us one hour a week, this project will be a major success.

To offer your one hour per week please contact:  
Paul G. Logan, 165 Pilgrim Road, Braintree, MA.  
02184. Phone: 617-843-4713.

E-Mail: 75107.2754@compuserve.com

Don't forget this is your organization, too!

## USS CASSIN YOUNG (DD 793)

In the December issue of the American Legion magazine was a very enjoyable article about the Cassin Young.

The Cassin Young now is tied up to pier one, Charleston Navy Yard, Boston, MA. This is the same pier that the USS Ozburn was commissioned at. The Cassin Young was commissioned on December 31, 1943 and had an impressive war record in WWII. A kamikaze smashed into the base of the bridge and the number one stack, exploding in the forward fireroom. It killed 21 men and wounded 47. The Young spent 20 rigorous months in the Pacific, engaged in seven battles and steamed 150,000 nautical miles. Admiral Chester Nimitz described destroyers as the Navy's most useful tool.

Whether in war or peace our destroyers were always ready to protect our country from any enemy force. Aside from protecting the US, destroyers also guided Navy men through their journey from boys to becoming men.

Many of us were just teenagers when we reported aboard the Ozburn for duty. Whether it was taking aboard stores, loading ammunition, standing your watches or just "turning to," we learned to respect authority and carry out our assignments. While ashore we learned to conduct ourselves in a respectable way (or suffer the consequence). We learned to accept the loneliness of long days at sea and separation of our loved ones. A lot of things we may have accepted without a grin, but we did accept authority, a must for a naval ship.

We may have had a lot of "gripes", that's part of a destroyer sailor's life. We may have come aboard a green kid, but when we walked down the Ozburn's gangway for the final time, we left mature men. We would look back on this experience as one of the most memorable and maturing times of our lives. The US may owe its destroyer men a debt, but we also owe the Navy.

### DID YOU KNOW??

The Ozburn Association now has members representing 41 States. We started off with a 17 members and now our rolls (active and inactive) have climbed to 232.

Could we reach a membership of 1000??

When the Ozburn was commissioned they were saying "do you think man could ever reach the moon?" What do the Sea Bees say?

## OZBURN RESCUES CREW OF FOUR FROM DOWNED HELICOPTER

Standing life guard duty on board the USS Ozburn, a unit of the Seventh Fleet, is usually a dull, uninteresting assignment. The crew is required to spend long hours waiting at their lifeguard stations. The training required for successful rescue operations often seems unnecessary and overdone.

On the morning of September 17, 1964 however, the long hours on station and training paid off. The word was over the ship's announcing system that a helicopter was in the water 800 yards ahead. Immediately, the well drilled crew sprang into action. The whale boat with its rescue crew was put into the water and on its way in only five minutes later.

Fire fighting parties with their hoses and foam generating equipment rushed to their stations, and rigged for the action. Only seven minutes after the word was first passed, the last of the four downed airmen was hauled into the ship's whaleboat by eager helping hands.

Meanwhile, the ship maneuvered alongside the still floating helicopter and extinguished the fire that threatened to explode the aircraft's gas tanks. Unfortunately the aircraft's flotation tanks failed shortly after the fire was put out due to the excessive strain put on them during the crash landing. Far outweighing the loss of the aircraft, was the fact that the aircraft's crew of four escaped entirely unharmed.

On board the Ozburn the aircraft crew consisting of LCDR Joseph E. Brady, LTJG Ronald E. Weber, G. L. Durrett, ADJ3 and R. R. Hester AMH3 were given dry clothes, and then sat down to lunch in the OZ's wardroom. The four men were transferred back to the carrier USS Kearsarge (CVS 33) after lunch- again by helicopter!

Ensign Norman Siedel, Michael Stewart, SN; and Brian Whelchel, EN3, crew of the motor whaleboat, are to be especially commended for their part in the quick rescue of the crew of the downed helicopter. The Ozburn was commanded by LCDR Marvin D. Nelson, Jr.

Article submitted by: Ron Kott (63-65)

## OZBOURN DESTROYS GUN EMPLACEMENTS

The Destroyer USS O'Brien (DD-725) took three direct hits from the enemy shore guns on December 23, 1966, and lost three crewmen, the first destroyer casualties of the war. USS Ozbourne (DD 846) suffered the same fate on a Sea Dragon patrol without loss of life several months later, but gained sweet revenge.

After a brief repair period at Subic, Ozbourne returned to the Tonkin Gulf with the guided-missile cruiser USS Providence (CLG-6), flagship for VAdm. John J. Hyland, commander of the Seventh Fleet.

The ships steamed into the same area where the Ozbourne had been shelled several months before. The Ozbourne lay close to the shore, using the sun as a glaring cover, while the Providence moved within range of the enemy shore guns. The North Vietnamese batteries opened fire on the slowly moving cruiser, while the hidden destroyer carefully plotted each gun flash on a map of that area. Then the Ozbourne opened fire and the gun emplacements, one by one, exploded in fireballs which could be seen miles seaward.

Article submitted by:

Former Skipper John G. Denham (66-68)

## MAIL BAG

Pat Patterson (50-51) E-mailed us from Ft. Smith, Arkansas. Pat is a retired Public School Administrator.

Jesse Hover (48-52), Placerville, CA, sent us some correspondence he sent to the CNO requesting the Ozbourne be used as a War Memorial. Jesse was unaware that the Ozbourne is probably part of a Japanese sky scraper by now. Jesse is a retired Art Instructor from City College in San Francisco.

James B. Michael (66-70) found us on the Ozbourne Internet homepage. He was a MM2 on board when the Ozbourne completed having Air Conditioning installed in the crews quarters. (we could have used that AC 20 years earlier going through the Panama Canal, Ed.) Jim is a former Training Supervisor for the Omaha Public Power.

Mark Trotter (72-73) found us on our Internet "Home Page"

Bob Whitten informed us of new member Bill Jones (51-52) from Goodyear, Arizona

E-mail from Bill Jones(51-52) trying to contact old shipmate Wayne Gurganius(51-54). Lucky we had Wayne's addressed phone number. Bill called Wayne and spoke to him for the first time in 40 years..

## FROM THE EDITORS DESK

As you can see from this edition the Ozbourne Association is starting to move on its recruiting drive. The contributions from the membership are setting up a good plan of attack to increase our membership. Our electronic media, our "Home Page" on the NET and E-mail response is starting to reach out to former crew members and is having a great impact. This can only improve in the future.

In addition our plan to research muster lists of Ozbourne crew members holds great promise. The more our membership increases the more talent and ideas will come aboard to increase our membership still further. Increasing our membership has many advantages to "all hands." We can renew old acquaintances, get more stories on the adventures of the Ozbourne, leave some history for our descendents and even get into some benefactor programs. The opportunities are numerous. New members will offer new ideas and leadership.

As of this issue (Vol 6) the Fireball! starts its sixth year of publication. (hardly seems possible). We have come a long way. With the dedication of the membership and the new members coming aboard we are going to make further strides. Again a "Well Done" to our founder, President Bob Whitten! The Ozbourne would have stayed in the 'scrap heap' without him, he deserves the accolade "FIREBALL!"

## INTERNET/E-MAIL CLUB

We're on the "NET". Come and join us.

Mark Trotter (72-73): mtrotter@ix.netcom.com

Dick Barnett (74-75): barnett@teleport.com

George Fink (46-48): Go68nk@aol.com

"WD" Minter (52-55):

wdminter@darkstar.swsc.k12.ar.us

Daryl Turner (48-52): Alhappyguy@aol.com

Richard Farquhar (56-58): rafassoc@infinet.com

Kent Curl (60-63): delcross@juno.com

Bill Jones (51-52): wljones2@juno.com

Jim Michael (66-70): jmichael@hunter.net

Pat Patterson (50-51): pogo@ipa.net

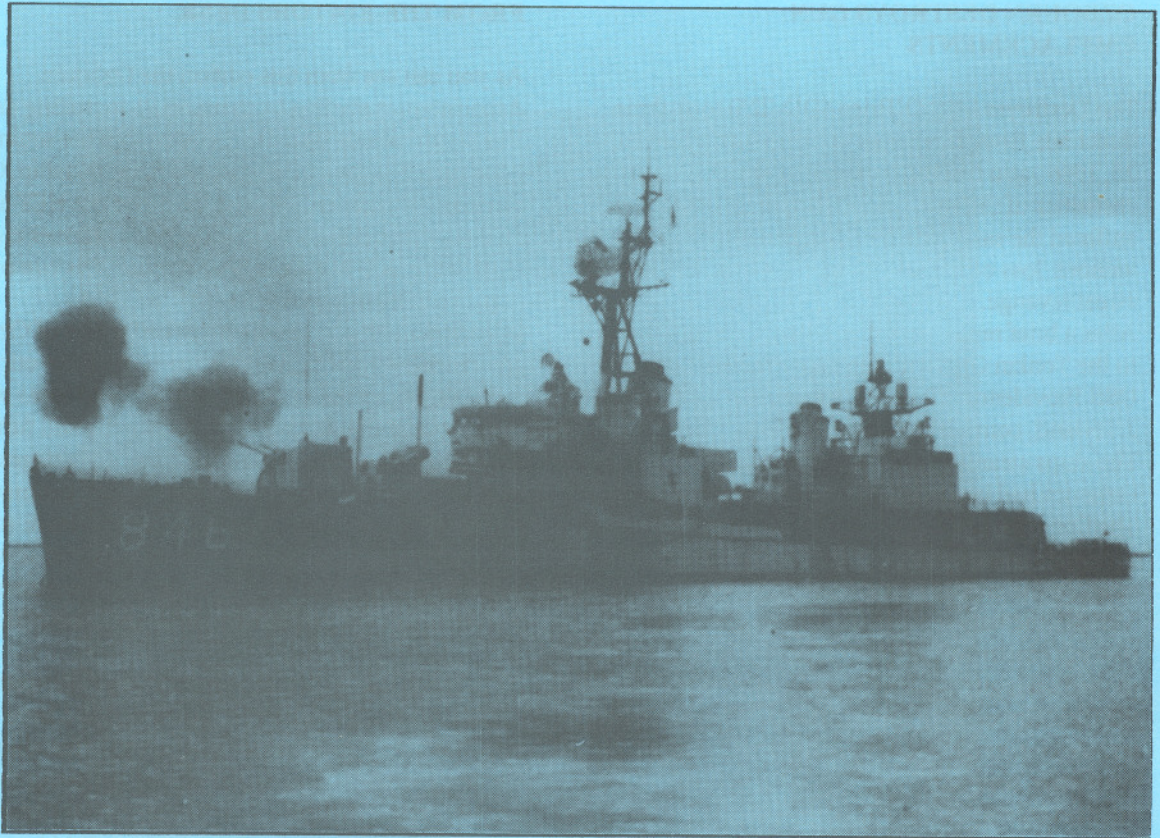
Dave Vrba (69-72): dave\_vrba@mail.sel.cony.com

and Editor of the *Fireball!*

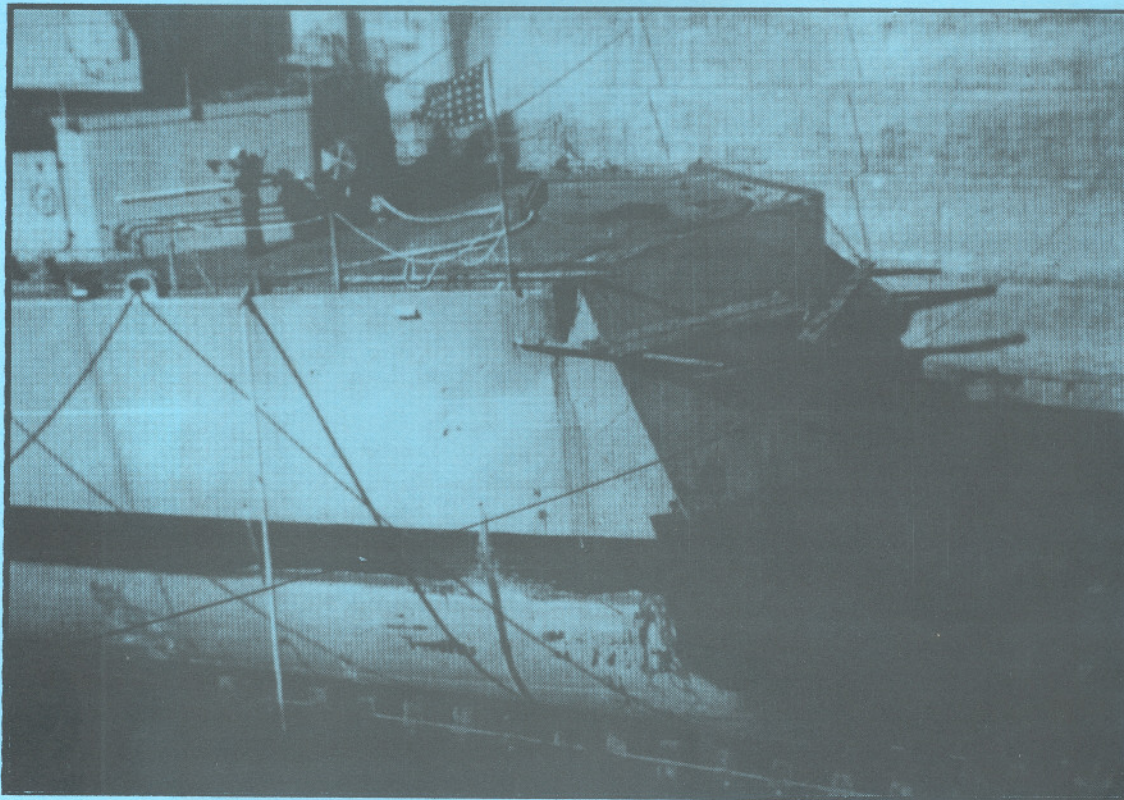
Paul Logan: 75107.2754@compuserve.com

It is a quick way to exchange information and ideas. If you would like to join send your address to:

75107.2754@compuserve.com



**Action Starboard! . . . Surface Target!**



**You may recognize the ship? Who is the sailor?**

## THE OFFICIAL HISTORY OF THE OZ

(continued from October 1996 Fireball!)

In May 1963, the Ozbourn joined Task Group 10 to prepare for a major Presidential Demonstration which would display the power and versatility of the First Fleet AAW and ASW forces. The Ozbourn was selected, from all First Fleet destroyers, as the ASROC firing control ship for the Anti-submarine portion of the exercise. President John F. Kennedy, from a grandstand seat on the flight deck of the USS Kitty Hawk (CVA-63) watched the Ozbourn successfully launch her Anti-Submarine rocket on 6 June.

During the summer months the Ozbourn served as night plane guard for the USS Hornet (CVS 12), USS Bennington (CVS 20), USS Midwar (CVA 41), and the USS Ticonderoga (CVA 14). She also provided services for the Pacific Fleet Marine Force with a three day gunnery shoot at San Clemente Island during which time she expended nearly 1000 rounds of 5" ammunition. (Ed. note. With all the ammo shelled on poor San Clemente the US Navy has yet to sink it)

On Sep. 9 the Ozbourn departed Long Beach with elements from DESRON 11 and DESRON 23, rendezvousing with the USS Hornet (CVS 12) in a new and unfamiliar roll. Ozbourn had joined her first HUK group, Task Group 31.8, and participated in exercise "Saddle Soap" from the 9th to the 20 of September. Twenty-one ships and dozens of aircraft, including units from the Canadian Pacific Fleet conducted a full-scale war game of the ASW mission.

The Ozbourn barley had time to catch her breath from "Saddle Soap" when an INSURV Inspection team boarded, scoured, and found the ship in good condition, ready for sea or war. Two days after INSUR on the third of October, Commander William W. Lancaster was relieved by Commander David W. Berger on board.

CDR Berger took his new command to sea the following Monday for two weeks of ASW training in company with the USS Yorktown (CVS 10), DESDIV 112 and CORTRON 3. The HUK group, working with the USS Bluegill (SS 42) conducted several exercises under extreme adverse weather conditions.

During January 1964 Ozbourn participated in the major fleet exercise "Operation Turk's Head" and received a letter of commendation from COMASWGRU FIVE Rear Admiral Caldwell.

In February Ozbourn entered Long Beach Naval Shipyard for her semi-annual overhaul. During this time major repairs were accomplished along with the installation of much new and modern equipment.

After leaving the shipyard in early may, the ship underwent six weeks of intensive underway refresher training conducted by COMFLETRAGRU San Diego.

On July 1964 Ozbourn sailed for Pearl Harbor to join ASW Group ONE and DESDIV 233 enroute to a six month Western Pacific deployment. After a short stay in Pearl Harbor, during which time COMDESDIV 233 shifted his flag to the Ozbourn, the ship sailed for Yokosuka, Japan.

On August 7, 1964 Lt. Commander Marvin D. Nelson, JR., relieved Commander Berger as Commanding Officer.

After six days in Yokosuka, Japan the Anti-Submarine Warfare group sailed for the South China Sea on alert after the North Vietnamese PT boat attacks on US Naval Ships in the Gulf of Tonkin.

This bring to a conclusion the history of the USS Ozbourn as told by shipmate Ron Kott who served as the Captain's yeoman from 1963-1965.

The Ozbourn continued her career until she was decommissioned in the spring of 1975. The Ozbourn was sold for scrap in December 1975 to General Metals, Tacoma, Washington for \$157,227.00. (You couldn't buy one of her main turbines for that money)

**The "Fireball!" would be interested in any history from the Gulf of Tonkin incident up to the decommissioning time.**

### MEMBERSHIP RECORDS

We are missing some basic data for some members. With this issue *some members* will find their data forms. Please fill out missing information and return to Paul Logan, 165 Pilgrim Road, Braintree, MA. 02184.

We are looking for time served aboard; rating; spouse's name; home phone and any other data you may want to include.

## OZBOURN ASSOCIATION ON THE "NET"

Association's "home page" on the INTERNET is alive and well. It has been visited 1252 times since its inception on 6/1/96 by prospective new members and others. It gives us a world wide forum to communicate news of our association. If you don't have access to a computer, check with your relatives and friends and "look us up". Our Internet address is: <http://darkstar.swsc.k12.ar.us/~wdminter/ozbourn.html>

## NEW MEMBERS

Welcome aboard new members who have joined up this past year:

Don Allen	Paul Langan (53-55)
James Burlingame (46)	Jordan Lindsey (53-55)
James Clay (52-55)	James Michael (66-70)
Richard Farquhar (56-57)	Calvin Patterson (50-51)
Donald Gorman (60-62)	Arnold Randrup
Jesse Hover (48-52)	Eldon Riley (53-56)
Bill Jones	John Keeling (71-3)
Robert Vargo	Jack King (51-54)
Thomas Dumsdorf (52-54)	

**PAUL G. LOGAN, EDITOR**  
**USS OZBOURN (DD 846) ASSOCIATION**  
**165 PILGRIM ROAD**  
**BRAINTREE, MA 02184**

### *USS OZBOURN (DD 846)* *Association*

#### **Officers:**

**President - Robert Whitten**  
**Vice President - Curtis Anderson**  
**Recording Secretary - Vacant**  
**Corresponding Secretary - Paul Logan**  
**Treasurer - Paul Hecht**  
***Fireball!* Editor - Paul G. Logan**  
**Advisor - Charles Akers**  
**Historian - Fred Conwell**

#### **Editorial Office:**

**165 Pilgrim Road**  
**Braintree, MA. 02184**  
**Tel. 617- 843- 4713**

#### **INTERNET ADDRESS:**

***75107.2754@compuserve.com***  
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**USS Ozbourn home Page Address:**  
**<http://darkstar.swsc.k12.ar.us/~wdminter/ozbourn.html>**

## LAST NOTICE !!

**ANNUAL 1996 DUES IS OVER-DUE .....**

**Your 1996 annual association dues was due July 1, 1996. Please send a check for \$10.00**

**to: Paul Hecht**  
**P.O. Box 3534**  
**Portsmouth, VA 23701-0534**

**Only dues paying members receive regular issues of the *Fireball!*.**

**Members who have not paid 1996 dues by December will be dropped from *Fireball!* mailing list. Don't get caught napping ! This could be your last issue.**

## CHANGE OF ADDRESS

Be sure you notify the "Association" if you change your address. You can send any changes to the Editor of the "*Fireball!*"